1; Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

grain in her mortar or working in her garden near by. On market days she takes the produce of the family's fields to the town to sell. If she has young children, she cares for them while she does her other work, but when they are old enough, they help her about the house if they are girls, or, if boys, go with their father to the garden. From time to time, when house repairs are needed or there are implements to be mended, the man spends a day at home getting these odd jobs done; otherwise only serious illness in the family keeps him from his fields.

The times for meals have not varied since the days when Moreau de St. Mery described the eating-habits of the slaves.[1] In addition to the mid-morning repast, the only other meal is that eaten after the man returns from his field, this being the largest of the day. A wife does not sit down with her husband, but usually eats earlier with her small children and holds herself ready to serve him upon his return, when, if he is alone, she remains to tell him the day's gossip. Visitors are often present, for peasant etiquette demands that all comers be offered food, and, as one Haitian expressed it, "The peasant would kill you for the insult if you did not share your meal with him." Bedtime, as might be expected, is early.

On Sundays and on the days of festivals this routine is interrupted, when, if the occasion is of sufficient importance and the habitation is not too far from town, the peasant and his family attend mass. On Saturday nights there is usually a *vodun* dance, when the early hour for retirement is forgotten and all-night festivities precede Sunday's rest. On such days the principal meal is eaten at three or four o'clock in the afternoon, and all the adults share it together, while at one side the children are fed from the dishes of their parents in response to the insistent repetition of the demand "*Ba'm pa'm* — give me my portion." *

* This is an example of the elision characteristic of Haitian Créole, it being abbreviated from *Ba moin part moin* or, in French, *Donnez-moi ma part.*

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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Northern Haiti flourished magnificently under Christophe's sternly benevolent rule. The King had that daring spirit of initiative which was so generally lacking in later Haitian history; he had, in addition, the power necessary to force through a new adjustment if the old way showed defects.[17] He excited artificial wants among his leaders by making nobles of them, and then compelled them to satisfy these wants without ever slipping back to a lower standard of living. Thirteen years of enforced labor and of order kept by a rigorously effective police force gave northern Haiti the kind of prosperity she had known in colonial days. Christophe encouraged commerce and protected foreign traders. He called in all debased coinage, substituting for it sound gold and silver currency. The revenue he raised was larger than it had been since 1791, amounting to about $3,500,000 annually. Probably the most eloquent testimony to his success is the fact that at his death, when the kingdom of the North was once more united with the republic of the South, more than six million dollars found their way into the republican treasury.

The Black King's economic system worked. It was based on a social division of the people, with the masses doing manual labor, and the aristocrats definitely set apart and recognized as upper class. By 1820 Haiti was well on its way toward the caste system.

3. *Pétion* (*1807–1818*)

Almost all Latin-American countries in the nineteenth century exhibited one common feature: an aristocratic landowning class lording it over peons. Haiti did not follow this pattern. She had aristocrats and peasants, but the aristocrats did not own most of the land, and the peasants were not peons. If later rulers had kept the organization of economic life begun by Toussaint and developed by his fellow blacks, Dessalines and Christophe, it is almost certain that Haitian social evolution would have resembled that of the rest of Latin America, for it would not have been a great change from

17. Duraciné Vaval, "Le Roi d'Haïti Henri Christophe," in *Revue de la Société d'Histoire et de Géographie d'Haïti*, II, No. 3 (June 1931), p. 14, says that Haiti's periodic civil troubles and social misfortunes, both ending in a diminution of the state's autonomy, have been due to economic maladjustments. "Our weaknesses in political life derive from our immobility in material production." Immobility is an index of stagnation. Few rulers of Haiti have been at once powerful enough to overcome the immobility and wise enough to know what measures had to be taken.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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family on an average, at 5 persons, husband, wife, and three children, we arrive at the conclusion, that the head of every third family in the state is engaged in cultivating his own freehold; a proportion of independent proprietors, such as perhaps scarcely any other country in the world can exhibit. The number of acres cultivated by these small proprietors, varies from 9 to 30; many of them keep horses, cows, and goats: they raise sufficient provisions of the bread kind, such as yams, plantains, and bananas, for the main support of their families; they kill hogs for meat, and they dispose of their coffee, cotton, hemp, castor oil, and fruit, at the public market for money, to purchase clothing, furniture, and other necessaries. The houses they live in, though poorly furnished, are decent habitations; and many of them have gardens attached, neatly fenced in with bamboo, or with logwood, or aloe hedges.[55]

If these figures are even approximately accurate, the majority of the people of Haiti had not yet become peasants in the sense of being landowners, for in the statement cited only a third of the people owned their land. Another large group, however, possibly a third of the population, were squatters, living on land which technically belonged to someone else but from which they were never ejected. The remaining third, excluding the town and village dwellers, were in the intermediate stage between hirelings and peasants. Some worked for a given rate of wages, but the larger number worked for shares of the produce on the land of large proprietors.

The crop-sharing system (Americans of the twentieth century call it share-cropping) of the 'thirties and 'forties was an automatic but temporary adjustment worked out in perfect disregard of the Code Rural. In general, two arrangements prevailed. By one the laborers worked in return for half the total produce of the estate, raising food for themselves in gardens provided by the owner; under the other they worked for a quarter of the produce, the proprietor guaranteeing to keep them in provisions. There was no general concurrence in Haiti at the time as to which plan was the more economical to the laborer and his family. Certainly both schemes were prejudicial to large crops of coffee and sugar, and therefore to the economic prosperity of the proprietors and the state; since this was so, the crop-sharing expedient was short-lived. Workers participating in it lived in the huts and cabins which, under the old régime, had been inhabited by their slave ancestors. As these fell to pieces others, cheaper and less soundly built, were constructed to take their place.

The crop-sharing system, economically debilitating though it was,

55. *Ibid.*